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NAME OF AUTHOR/*NOM DE L'AUTEUR* Kelleen Toohey

TITLE OF THESIS/*TITRE DE LA THÈSE* Teacher and Student Interaction in an Indian School

UNIVERSITY/*UNIVERSITÉ* University of Alberta

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED/*GRADE POUR LEQUEL CETTE THÈSE FUT PRÉSENTÉE* M. Ed.

YEAR THIS DEGREE CONFERRED/*ANNÉE D'OBTENTION DE CE GRADE* 1977

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

TEACHER AND STUDENT INTERACTION IN AN INDIAN SCHOOL

by

© KELLEEN TOOHEY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN

ANTHROPOLOGY AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1977

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Teacher and Student Interaction in an Indian School" submitted by Kelleen Toohey in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Anthropology and Intercultural Education.

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ABSTRACT

"Cultural conflict" is used as a descriptor of the experience of children from cultural minority backgrounds in schools (Zintz 1963; Wax, Wax and Dumont 1964; Cazden and John 1968; Sindell 1974). Schools are assumed to operate on and transmit "mainstream" middle-class values in North American and it is further assumed that these will come into conflict with the values of minorities. The school is seen as an important arena of interaction between "mainstream" and minority groups.

This thesis is concerned with a school serving Cree Indian children on a reserve in north-eastern Alberta. A brief discussion of how the school came to be located on the reserve, the reserve and school communities, and the ongoing operation of the school in 1975-76 is provided. Making explicit some of the factors involved in the interaction between teachers and students in the school might help to explicate more nearly adequately than the notion "cultural conflict" the experience of Indian children in that school.

The thesis critically examines some of the components of the cultural conflict explanation of native educational failure as it has been applied in literature about native education. A theoretical framework for doing micro-analysis of school interaction using power as a dimension of that analysis is provided. Situational analysis of

interaction in the school is presented and finally, the thesis evaluates the notion of cultural conflict as descriptive of interaction at Kehewin School.

Acknowledgements

I would first like to express my appreciation to the Chief and Council of Kehewin Indian Reserve for granting permission for this study to be conducted. I am grateful to the staff and the children of Kehewin School for their co-operation and generous hospitality during the time I spent at the school. The Boreal Institute for Northern Studies of the University of Alberta awarded me a Grant-in-Aid for Northern Research in 1976 which allowed me to spend nine weeks at the school. For that and the helpful assistance of their library staff, I am appreciative.

I would also like to thank members of my committee, Professor Carl Urion, Professor Marilyn Assheton-Smith and Dr. G.P. Sampson for all their efforts in connection with this thesis. For advice during the initial stages I am grateful to Dr. R. Darnell. For conversation, support and criticism, I would like to thank the other graduate students in Intercultural Education who made some of it fun.

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CHAPTER ONE

CULTURAL CONFLICT AND DISCONTINUITY OF SOCIALIZATION IN NATIVE EDUCATION

Literature concerned with native education often suggests that native children experience "cultural conflict" as they move from the physical and social environments of their homes and communities to the very different environment of the school (Hawthorn 1967; Cazden and John 1968; Sindell 1974; et al). Educational failure, as documented by high drop-out rates, age-grade retardation and other achievement metrics, is explained partly by this notion of discontinuity in socialization. The purposes of this chapter will be to discuss briefly the historical provenance of the discontinuity of experience explanation, to show its currency in literature about native education and to note some theoretical deficiencies in its adequacy as explanation.

Ruth Benedict (1938) discussed discontinuity in conditioning within cultures in terms of the different types of behaviour expected of individuals at different stages in their growth (and the subsequent change of their social definition) from "child" to "adult". She suggested that such discontinuity was by no means a cultural universal and that some societies were much more consistent than others in behavioural expectations for "children" and "adults". Dramatic

discontinuity was hypothesized as producing strain which was, in part, offset in some societies by rigid age-grading and/or elaborate rites of passage.

This notion of discontinuity with its attendant psychological stress was later applied to situations of different cultures in contact where, at some stage, one culture assumed significant responsibility for the socialization of children from the other culture(s). DuBois' (1955) statement is representative:

> The establishment of western schools, especially boarding schools and curricula in non-western societies is likely to constitute an extreme type of cultural discontinuity and may do much to force 'either-or' choices upon their learners. (1955:102)

With an articulation of the values, behavioural expectations and attitudes of the non-western society and non-western parents, and a corresponding articulation of what the school (and the community it represents) expects, the non-western student is seen as being caught somewhere in the middle and as having to make choices about which set of conventions to satisfy. This syndrome of "living between two cultures" has been used to describe the native student's schooling experience and has been noted to produce alienation and psychological disturbance in the student (Bryde 1966; King 1967; Couture 1972).

Elaborations of differences, particularly but not only in child-rearing practices, between "Indians" and "Non-Indians" underlie the explanation of educational failure as based upon discontinuity of experience. If a child is socialized before his schooling (and outside of the institutional context) by adults who have radically

different values, behavioural expectancies and broadly, different "traits" than the adults he encounters in the schooling institution, he is assumed to experience conflict, discontinuity, confusion and more often than not, failure. Literature which elaborates on cultural difference often expresses difference as deficiency; in comparison of "Indian" and "Non-Indian" traits, one or the other group's traits will be characterized as deficient or dysfunctional. More often then not, "Indians" emerge as deficient but in certain categories, for example, "sharing" or "independence of children", they are evaluated very positively.

Volume II of the "Hawthorn Report", published in 1967, A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada - Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies explicitly assumes (p. 107):

> 1. Schooling of any type would represent a discontinuity of experience for the Indian child and the discontinuity would impede his early scholastic achievement.

based upon observations such as the following (p. 112-113):

> Any child who is deprived of stimulation is likely to be deficient in development of various abilities. Indian children do receive stimulation but the variety is limited to a narrow spectrum in comparison with that available to most non-Indian children... Indian and Non-children have different psychological environments in the following ways:...
>
> Verbal Practice and Development
>
> | Indian | Non-Indian |
> | --- | --- |
> | Conversations between adults and children often limited; questions often answered in monosyllables; custom sometimes demands silence from children in the presence of adults; English spoken by adults often inaccurate and limited in vocabulary; some children have the opportunity to | Conversations often unlimited; detailed answers given as often as monosyllabic replies; child's speech and labelling may be corrected consistently; English spoken by parents usually correct |

hear stories which have colourful imagery and language. No one reads to the child.	and diverse; child is read to often and has books of his own.

Burger (1968:106-108) also uses contrasting configurations (his categories are "Yankee" and "Amerindians-in-general") where differences are pointed out; these configurations are described as a method for "sensitizing teachers to cultural differences" (Colfer 1974:12).

These catalogues of differences between "Indians" and "Non-Indians" are used as evidence for the cultural conflict and discontinuity of experience explanation of educational failure of native students. This discussion will briefly present two explanations used in the literature which describe the reasons why native people are so different from the white middle-class and will then critically examine these explanations for their adequacy of characterization of both "Indian" and "Non-Indian" people.

Traditionalism and the Culture of Poverty

Evidence employed for the discontinuity of socialization explanation of native educational failure focuses upon ethnographic accounts of native communities which point out differences between those and "white" communities and therefore, differences in the pre-school and out-of-school socialization of native children from that of white middle-class children. The sources of difference in the native community often are described by the persistance of "traditional" values in the native community or by describing the native community as participating in and transmitting a "culture

of poverty".[1] Hickerson (1967:324) notes that description of the persistance of traditional values in native communities has been based firstly upon the assumption that "basic personality structures, implying a tribal or national character (Hallowell, 1955:351)" exist and secondly, that these structures are "thought to have persisted through history unchanged". Not only are values and personality structures assumed to persist, but also behavioural patterns. Renaud's (1971:31) statement is typical:

> Indian people still know from hunting and teepee days how to interpret behavior and how to communicate with one another through behavior without oral language.

The "culture of poverty" description of native communities is based on assuming that the poor of the Americas (and perhaps the world) share cultural traits, despite their ethnicity, which are transmitted from generation to generation and which can be generally described. Oscar Lewis (1966:xlv and 21) characterized the poor as fearful, suspicious, possessing a "strong present-time orientation with relatively little disposition to defer gratification and plan for the future" and as "...psychologically unready to take full advantage of changing conditions or improving opportunities which may develop in their lifetime." Leacock (1971:10) notes that culture of poverty theorists characterize the poor as having "... low educational motivation and inadequate preparation for an occupation -- factors

---

[1] Renaud (1971:27-28) relies on both explanations using an acculturationist framework:

> "The overall culture or way of life prevailing in most Indian communities is at variance with that of normal Canadian community... True, there are regional differences between Indian communities, east to west, and north to south, particularly

that perpetuate unemployment and despair". Moynihan (1965:47), in the culture of poverty tradition, describes the American Negro community as a "tangle of pathology" and describes the Negro family as:

> ...the principal source of most of the aberrant, inadequate or antisocial behavior that did not establish, but now serves to perpetuate the cycle of poverty and deprivation.

The traits Lewis and others have identified for the poor are said to be cultural adaptations and the pathology of these traits explains the perpetuation of poverty and the manifold "social problems" of these groups.

Traditionalism

North American educational literature about native people is largely uncritical of seeing "Indian" cultural traits as atavistic or within the culture of poverty. The persistance of "traditional values" is used as an explanation for problems faced by native people, including problems of educational failure. "Traditionalism" is problematic, suggesting that two hundred years plus of activity within the economic structures of North America, the reserve experience with attendant changes in native political organization, residence patterns, familial organization etc., have produced little or no substantive changes in the values or behavioural patterns of

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> in the extent to which traditional values and skills are persevering. There is no doubt that in southern and rapidly urbanizing areas of the provinces... traditional values and skills are disappearing. However, they are not being universally replaced by those of the middle-class industrial society but unfortunately by those values and skills identified recently as characteristic of the culture of poverty ...Many local Indian cultures are disintegrating, but enough of the original core values are persevering, even in a dysfunctional way..."

native people. Somehow, pristeen pre-contact behavioural patterns and values are assumed to have persisted and it is also assumed that they can be described in their contemporary manifestations. An obvious difficulty lies in the fact that description of precontact states is limited by inadequate data [Hickerson (1967:323) asserts "...there is no historical evidence available at this point for aboriginal personality structure, simply because there was no one to observe precontact Indians..."].[2]

The "Culture of Poverty"

Criticising the utilization of the term "culture of poverty", Valentine (1968:16-17) observes that:

> Analysis in terms of the 'culture of poverty' may distract attention away from crucial structural characteristics of the stratified social system and focus if instead on alleged motivational peculiarities of the poor that are doubtful validity or relevance.

Like the persistance of traditional values perspective, the culture of poverty explanation focuses on dysfunctional traits or values of the poor which perpetuate their poverty. As Valentine notes, there "motivational peculiarities" are highly problematic as their definition as pathology reflects only the social scientist's perception of difference. Many writers (Liebow 1967; Harris 1971; Valentine 1971;

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[2] A further difficulty is the lumping together of "Amerindians in general". Hymes (1967:12) notes:

> "Among the Hopi and Zuni of the American Southwest, for instance, severe socialization pressure is initiated at about two years of age, before the child can have reasons verbally explained...; Among the Wishram Chinook socialization pressure is withheld until the child can talk and have reasons verbally explained....".

These observed highly divergent child-rearing practices for example, of different Indian groups challenges the assumption that North American Indians could or can be described unitarily.

et al) are suspicious of the validity of these perceptions of difference. Even in cases where differences may be said to obtain, the seeing of them as explanatory of poverty, "tends to justify the position of inferior economic and political status which Indian people continue to hold in relation to Whites" (Hickerson 1967:32).

Rodman (1964:65) in commenting upon the middle class perception of lower class behaviours as "problems" notes:

> My own feeling is that it makes more sense to think of them as solutions of the lower class to problems they face in the social, economic and perhaps legal and political spheres of life.

Rainwater (1969:9) notes:

> ...one can hope that as a result of the social science efforts to date, 'thinking people' will stop deluding themselves that the underclass is other than a product of an economic system so designed that it generates a destructive amount of income inequality....

External conditions, like economic systems which may be adverse to the attainment of desired ends are ignored within the "culture of poverty" explanation and it is finally no more explanatory of poverty than the nineteenth century notion that the poor are so because they deserve to be.

Adequacy of a Dualistic Focus

The ethnography which is appealed to in the discontinuity of socialization explanation of native educational failure, which documents differences in "traits", has been based on simplistic characterizations of both native communities and "mainstream" society. Both are characterized as internally consensual, classless and unchanging and differences between native communities and the dominant societies are appositive. Basically, it seems to be assumed that

native communities are and have been geographically, politically, economically and broadly, socially, isolated from the context in which they are found. It is further assumed that these "isolated" communities can be unitarily studied apart from that context. This assumption of isolation ignores precisely that interaction between native communities and segments of the broader society which might be more nearly adequately explanatory of the situations of native people today. This perspective which assumes isolation lacks discussion, for example, of the integration of native people into North American and international economic structures both presently and historically.[3] In many cases, discussion of the historically changing economics of Indian reserves or native communities is so cursory in the literature that economics appears unimportant. Stavenhagen (1965:54) notes:

> The importance attributed by ethnologists to cultural elements of Indian populations has long concealed the nature of the socio-economic structures into which these populations are integrated.

One would certainly expect that "cultural" studies of any people would necessarily involve an examination of their economic activities and it is only by assuming that native groups are located somewhere outside the North American economic structure that the ethnographer fails to recognize relationships with the broader society which are not recent, peripheral or minor. In the light of the general acceptance of something like Cardinal's (1969) assertion that poverty is the most persistent reality of Indian life, it appears odd that ethnographers

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[3] Documentation of economic integration in the fur trade, for example, has produced some extremely important insights regarding changes and adaptations made by local Indian groups as involvement increased (c.f. Fisher 1969; Leacock 1954; Asch 1977).

do not more seriously examine relationships with the broader society which might be more nearly adequately explanatory of the cause of poverty, in terms other than simple appeal to a universal "culture of poverty". Studying small communities without examining their interactions with the broader context cannot explain adequately the problems these communities face.

Hedley's (1971:1) critique of acculturation studies, which also assume isolation, points out other problematic corollary assumptions:

> The specific concern... is with acculturation studies of North American Indian people. However, these studies epitomize a general tendency in anthropology for attention to be directed toward small communities which are then treated as though they could be understood as existing in isolation from their wider context. This tendency involves other assumptions among which are homogeneity of interests, value consensus as the basis of integration and an emphasis on stability and continuity over time. Consequently, there is no place for the existence of conflicting interests and there is a lack of concern with problems of power and therefore, an inadequate basis for the analysis of change.

Ethnography of native communities which does not examine their complex historical and contemporary relationships with the broader society cannot explain the problems these communities face. Characterising either the "dominant society" or native communities as homogeneous, consensual and immutable, produces very simplistic notions of the social situations of North America. Certainly the binary and appositive value and culture trait matrices quoted above, which are typical of educational literature concerned with native education, are based upon assumptions of "homogeneity of interests" and "value consensus" in both communities. The Hawthorn report's quasi-ethnography of communication (quoted previously) of "Indians" and

and "Non-Indians" would be highly unacceptable to those professionals working in this area because of its wide generalization, its non-recognition of dialect and certainly, its dualism.

Further, it is assumed that the "norms" of native people are pathological, or at least dysfunctional, in their appositiveness from those said to be characteristic of the dominant society, and therein lies the explanation of problems faced by native people. Mills (1963:534) in examining textbooks in the field of social disorganization notes the "low level of abstraction" of the literature which assumes that deviation from the norms of "society" explains or even describes "social problems":

> "If the norms were examined, the investigator would perhaps be carried to see total structures of norms and to relate these to distributions of power. Such a structural point of view is not usually achieved. The level of abstraction does not rise to permit examination of these normative structures themselves."

Power relationships, which might better lend themselves to binary configurations ("Indian" and "White") are ignored as are structural obstacles to the solutions to problems faced by native people.[4] Beside recognizing the obvious, albeit well-intentioned, imputations of native deficiency in these catalogues of "difference", the social scientist would do well to examine critically the assumptions of homogeneity of interests, classlessness and consensuality as characteristic of native communities or the social context in which they are found.

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[4] Mills (1963:550) states:

> "They do not typically consider whether or not certain groups or individuals caught in economically underprivileged situations can possible obtain the current goals without drastic shifts in the basic institutions which channel and promote them".

Some of the most basic problems which arise from the "traditionalism" and "culture of poverty" explanations are the assumptions of homogeneity of interests and value consensus, which Hedley notes. Both perspectives assume a congruence between culture and personality, effected through socialization or enculturation, where the individual personality is shaped by the culture to which it belongs. A consensus in values and goals among members of the same culture is assumed to exist and is further assumed to be necessary for the continued existence of that culture. Wallace (1961:29) calls this "one of the most hoary assumptions" of social science, quoting Durkheim's (n.d.) thesis that the "common sentiments" of the members of a society are necessary for the "integration" of that society. Wallace's (1961) approach to culture and personality studies, on the other hand, stresses the diversity of human personalities found within all cultures, arguing that "human societies may characteristically require the nonsharing of certain cognitive maps among participants in a variety of institutional arrangements." He (1961:39-40) notes that:

> Ritual, for instance, if often differently conceptualized by viewers and performers, public entertainment similarly is variously perceived by professional and audience: the doctor (or shaman) and patient relationship demands a mutual misunderstanding.

He views a culture as a "mechanism for the organization of diversity of individual psychological differences within cultural boundaries" and sees "the analytical problem ...the elucidation of the processes of the organization of diversity rather than the mechanism of inducing a supposed uniformity." (1962:4)

Wallace's approach which holds cultures as organizational contracts between members of a society, who do not share precisely equivalent motivations, understandings or cognitions, defines relationships as systems of "equivalent behavior expectancies". Although members of a culture have diverse motivations, personality structures, role memberships etc., with the contractual nature of cultural systems, behaviour is more or less predictable. Complementarity rather than uniformity, of cognitions and motives allows the cultural system to continue. Remembering that North American native people have not lived in isolation from their broader European-American context for some time, interaction between native and "whites" can be usefully viewed as not based on uniformity of cognitive or personality structures;

> Thus, reciprocal interactions between the representatives of geographically separate groups as alien as American Indian tribes and colonial or state governments have proceeded for centuries, with only minimal sharing of motives or understanding on a basis of carefully patterned equivalences. (Wallace 1961:40)

A conceptualization which sees uniformity and value consensus as characteristic of human cultures cannot account for change or conflict within those cultures:

> ...social economic organization, technological developments, and unresolved conflicts within and among institutional structures with which the individual must cope if he is to live are not taken into account as exerting a constant and pervasive influence on the culture patterns that define adult behavior (Leacock 1973:103).

It is apparent, therefore, that discussion of the persistance or the non-persistance of aboriginal traits assumes there were "aboriginal traits" where the personalities of pre-contact native people reflected or were expressions of the aboriginal culture. Wallace's more

productive approach to culture challenges this assumption; within the perspective which sees diverse personalities as organized by contractual culture systems, the "modal aboriginal personality structure" becomes meaningless. Aboriginal organization of diversity is a useful construct but that organization must be seen as dynamic and changing as "social economic organization, technological developments and unresolved conflicts within and among institutional structures" are recognized.

I have argued that ethnographies of native people which focus on dualistic comparisons between "Indian" and "White" communities have not produced acceptable characterizations of either group. The terms themselves, with their implications of collectivity pose more analytic problems (e.g., group boundaries, homogeneity) than the very "problem" they purport to address. More nearly adequate ethnographies would be required to include discussion of the integration of native people into North American society, historically and in the present, and would have to take into account the non-autonomous political nature of native communities where classical sociological definitions of colonialism might apply and where "value consensus" and "homogeneity of interests" are inapplicable. Carstens (1971:29) asserts that "Indians are members of little colonies within the borders of the dominating nations". The possibility that

> "the behaviour of the Indian status person resident in these communities is not necessarily an 'ethnic' kind of behaviour, but rather a kind of behaviour typical of a social class as an element in the social class hierarchy of Canadian society" (Fisher 1976:459).

has not been extensively explored in ethnographies of native communities. Studies of these small communities have to take into account the

historical and contemporary economic, political and social interactions between these communities and the larger context in which they exist.

With the above in mind, anthropology and applied fields must also attempt to examine critically the internal dynamics operating within institutions such as the school in native communities to assess their role in the perpetuation of problems.[5] Keddie (1971: 133) suggests that:

> ...explanations of educational failure are most often given in terms of pupils' ethnic and social class antecedents and rely upon a concept of social pathology rather than one of cultural diversity. It is only recently that attention has been given to the defining processes occurring within the school itself and to the social organization of curriculum knowledge.

The next chapter of this thesis attempts to provide a framework for looking at some of these "defining processes", the internal dynamics of interaction in an Indian school.

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[5]Development theorists (Frank, Carnoy, etc.) have been recently critiqued for their definition of all causes of Third World underdevelopment as a product of international forces and for their concommitant underemphasis on analysis of internal factors (such as the roles of indegenous elites) which contribute to the perpetuation of underdevelopment.

CHAPTER TWO

A PERSPECTIVE ON SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF CLASSROOM INTERACTION

Much situational, interactional analysis has been critiqued generally for its conservativeness (McNall and Johnson 1975; Mills 1963; Zeitlin 1973; Lyman and Scott 1970); this sort of analysis in its micro-orientation, is faulted for its underemphasis on or ignoring of power relationships, social context and history. McNall and Johnson (1975:63), in discussing the work of ethnomethodologists, phenomenologists and social interactionists state: "The reliance on a situational perspective can seriously limit one's understanding of contemporary events" because, in painstakingly detailed description of "events", causes beyond the immediately observable cannot be considered, power is not usually a factor in the analysis, situations are treated as unique and persons are conceived of as free agents in their social activities capable of acting, or not acting, in accord with interactional norms. Lyman and Scott (1970) call research based upon these assumptions, "the sociology of the absurd" and describe the characterization of man from this perspective as "...being constructed -- and of constructing -- social reality in every situation" (1970:5). Further, from this perspective "The sociologists must view man as the maker and remaker of social existence, as the producer and reproducer of stable engagements, as the craftsman of society and the ever-

renewed social order" (Lyman and Scott 1970:6). The constraints affecting human behaviour cannot be explained with this characterization of man as a "free" agent. Situational analysis often takes as its central metaphor, the stage, where persons act out their individual scripts. McNall and Johnson (1975:62) notes that dramaturgical metaphor does not consider "...who wrote the play, who directs the actors, who buys the tickets and who is really backstage."

Cora DuBois' assertion (quoted previously) that "non-Western" students make "'either or'" choices about whether to satisfy the conventions of the school, assumes the same sort of freedom for social actors. Power within the school setting, in terms of one person's control over the behaviour of others, is not considered when it is assumed that children can make choices. Philips (1974:11) has asserted that cultural obliteration rather than cultural conflict is descriptive of a situation where:

> ...a teacher's framework is dominant ... Teacher and student do not meet on an equal basis and work out between them what is meaningful and what is right and wrong. It is the teacher who defines what is meaningful, what is appropriate, what is true and what is false.

Similarly, Waller (1932:195 and 196) noted: "The teacher-pupil relationship is a form of institutionalized dominance and subordination" and further, "Authority is on the side of the teacher. The teacher nearly always wins. In fact he must win or he cannot remain a teacher."

Robinson (1974), in describing the "methodological self-criticism" of A.G. Green's (1972) study of an infant classroom, lauds an approach to situational analysis which takes power into account.

Robinson (1974:262) describes the approach:

> In looking at members' negotiation of everyday life he (Green) is cognizant of both the material and political setting in which negotiation takes place; immediately the model of man as a freewheeling creator of his world is tempered somewhat in recognition of the constraints, the lack of manoeuvrability in any negotiation. Thus Green is critical of many phenomenologically inspired explanations in that they 'stress the shared nature, or commonality of meanings and underplay the explanation of actions in terms of power and control, with the social structuring of the opportunities to act ...They therefore underplay the need to explain and invoke features of social situations external to and impinging upon the actors, of which they man or may not be falsely conscious' (p. 13).

This discussion will make use of a definition of Erving Goffman's (1961), the encounter, to describe some interaction in the classrooms of an Indian school. Goffman can be generally criticized for failing to deal with power in most of his analysis of social situations. This problem will be later discussed. The definition of the encounter, however, as applied to observed social situations, makes this deficiency obvious.

Goffman (1961:16) discusses the encounter or "focused gathering" as "...a type of social arrangement that occurs when persons are in one another's immediate physical presence". He notes further:

> For the participants, this involves: a single visual and cognitive focus of attention; a mutual and preferential openness to verbal communication; a heightened mutual relevance of acts; an eye-to-eye ecological huddle that maximizes each participants' opportunity to perceive the other participants' monitoring of him (Goffman, 1961:18).

In classrooms, both focused and unfocused gatherings ["Those interpersonal communications that result solely by virtue of persons being

in one another's presence..." (Goffman 1961:7)] can be identified. Describing some interaction in classrooms in terms of encounters permits formal description of these particular sorts of social situations.

Goffman defines encounters partly by specification of those things which are irrelevant to them. Attributes of participants, such as relative wealth, social status, emotional-psychological states etc., are officially irrelevant in encounters: encounters are conceptualized as "putting a frame around a spate of immediate events" (p. 20) and quoting Simmel (1950:45-46), Goffman (1961:21) notes that within encounters as in sociability "...one does 'as if' all were equal". Goffman notes that atributes of participants are not entirely absent as the frame of an encounter is a "sieve not solid" ["...a few externally based matters ...seep through to the encounter" (p. 30)]. but he does not specifically discuss the effect of these externally based matters on the encounter. "Fun in Games", the essay in which Goffman most extensively develops a definition of the encounter relies heavily on descriptions and examples of board-games. Board games may be seen as somewhat different from other types of encounters in that one sort of external matter ("power") there is importantly situationally derived, i.e., the poorest, the youngest, the female participant, who might not have "power" outside the encounter, can <u>win</u> a game. In "Asylums" (1961) Goffman does deal explicitly with externally-based power -- that of the institution to define and control the lives of its inmates, patients or clients.

In the discussion of classroom encounters, where a teacher is a participant, power must be a consideration. The specification

of how this power is exercised situationally makes clear some aspects of the school and classroom which are not usually articulated in the literature. Goffman's definition of the encounter as a particular sort of social situation which can be isolated and described in terms of rules is very useful for describing classroom interaction: it is important to realize that these rules have sources. Who decides what the rules shall be, who enforces them and how this enforcement is enacted is a facet of the discussion which might help to make the description of classroom interaction less limited in perspective and more nearly adequately explanatory of the experience of persons in schools. This description attempts to consider the dominance of the teacher's interpretive framework. Analysis will examine how "norms" are situationally operationalized and will consider who has the power of norm definition. A teacher will be considered to be exercising power and controlling students when she makes efforts to change on-going activity. The kind of changes which will be most extensively analyzed are those where it is apparent that the teacher defines on-going activity as inappropriate to the classroom and because of this definition, change is seen as necessary. Teacher definition of student behaviour as inappropriate might be explicit, in cases where the teacher specifically verbally identifies behaviour and subsequently demands its termination or change. The definition of behaviour as "infractory", in other cases, may not be so clear when the teacher does not specifically identify an infractory behaviour but still demands change or termination. One type of change demanded by teachers might be the termination of one activity (for example, Mathematics) and the initiation of another (for example, Science),

where duration of allowable activities is under the teacher's control. Some activities, however, in which students are engaged are terminated because they are always defined by the teacher as infractory (for example, physical conflict between students when it is not regulated as in physical education perhaps). It is these types of activities which are regularly changed or terminated by individual teachers, with which this discussion will be primarily concerned.

The types of encounters evident in classrooms are various and one way of distinguishing them is on the basis of the types of participants found in them. For example, there are encounters which involve only varying numbers of students;[1] encounters involving only adults, normally teachers; and encounters involving a teacher and varying numbers of students. It is this latter type of encounter with which this discussion will be primarily concerned. The encounter involving the teacher and varying numbers of students has some special features: unlike most gaming encounters, students are "assigned" to participation in encounters and have ostensibly no choice about their involvement or non-involvement in them. One person (the teacher) officially and more or less comprehensively controls the behaviour of other interactants.[2] Further, the classroom encounter is unique in that students are expected to commit infractions of

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[1] These are rarely "official" classroom encounters (those sanctioned by the teacher) except during times and in places where children have explicit control over their own interaction. The playground at recess is an example of such a time and place where, within certain limits, children control their own interaction.

[2] The fact that this control is sometimes subverted or appropriated by children for short periods of time does not fundamentally threaten the right of the teacher to control.

interactional norms[3]; the way in which the teacher (and it must be the teacher) anticipates, diverts and/or handles these infractions when they occur has come to be called "classroom control" or "discipline" and has become important in judgement of teacher effectiveness. Waller (1932:29) notes the importance of this control in judgement of teacher efficiency:

> A teacher who keeps order in his classroom is usually regarded as efficient, even if his instruction fails of any considerable effect upon the student mind. But a teacher who often troubles his superiors with disciplinary problems will rightly be considered inefficient.

Grimshaw (1973:99), in speaking of the educational difficulties of minority children has suggested:

> If one accepts the proposition that teaching and learning -- as types of social behaviours -- are governed by systems of rules and that these rules differ for different social groups, and that we do not know at present what the systems of rules are, then one must also tentatively accept the hypothesis that one of the reasons for pedagogic failure lies in the fact that we are continually putting children in situations where they are being asked to violate one set of rules in order to fulfill the demands of another.

Grimshaw is not here speaking of different epistemologies in speaking of the "systems of rules" for teaching and learning of different social groups; his interest is the sorts of appropriate social behaviours, particularly communicative behaviours, which might be

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[3]Philips (1974:143) notes that these infractions are explained by teachers as consistent with their characterization of children as imperfect adults ("'not-a-full-person'"). Humanistic theorists might argue that children have not yet learned the duplicity available to adults and therefore, behave somehow more "honestly" in interaction. In any case, it appears to be assumed that children will more or less frequently transgress the rules of "normal" interaction while the style of correction of these infractions will vary as children's behaviour is regarded romantically or negatively.

different for different social groups.[4] He advocates ethnographies of communication in dealing with the problems of not being aware of the different interactional norms of different social groups. Hymes (1967:13) makes the same plea:

> "In short, there must be a study of speaking that seeks to determine the native system and theory of speaking; whose aim is to describe the communicative competence that enables a member of the community to know when to speak, when to remain silent, which code to use, when, where and to whom, etc."

Asserting that very little is known of the systems of rules defining proper communicative behaviour in groups not sharing the cultural, linguistic and class background of North American educators, for example, seems to be well substantiated. Philips (1974) illustrates this point by observing that the amount of silence time after a white teacher asks a classroom question and before she concludes none of her Warm Springs Indian students are going to answer (whereupon she "takes the floor" again herself) would be interpreted in many situations in that Indian community as "...much too brief -- so brief as to be interpreted as trying to keep people from talking" (1974:13). The teacher was unaware of the differential amounts of silence time appropriate in the Indian community for question-answering and her ignorance of this communicated quite different meanings to her Indian students than were intended. The students' silence could communicate to the teacher inaccurate information as well (e.g.,

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[4]Rules in a school textbook for "proper" listening behaviour are cited, where exhortations to look at the speaker might violate the norms of some groups wherein "looking directly at a speaker, particularly one of higher status, is considered rude". (Grimshaw 1973:106).

Indians are shy, the students did not know the answer to the question asked, they were hostile etc.).

Description of differences in communicative styles on a micro-level which Grimshaw advocated involves a stance of cultural relativity attractive to many. If the differences between the minority group and "mainstream" society are at the level, for example, of rules for floor-holding, silence time, appropriate eye contact etc., description of differences does not appear to be normative or based upon assumptions of deficiency. However, this perspective still must assume that differential success or failure rates in schools (or other institutional contexts) are explained by the discontinuity of experience of the "failer" who enters a highly divergent social arena from that in which (s)he has been previously socialized. The present discussion tries to point out that cataloguing cultural differences in values, traits or even, rules for appropriate eye contact, does not explain any highly significant aspect of the experience of Indian children in schools. Assuming that minority-group children suffer psychological conflict in deciding whether or not to satisfy the conventions of the school involves a further assumption, i.e., that children have such choice. With recognition of the teacher's power to define "what is meaningful, what is appropriate, what is true and what is false" (Philips 1974:11) student choice becomes very limited.

Further, on the subject of cataloguing differences between cultures, Wallace's observations cited in Chapter One are appropriate to recall here. He notes the diversity of motivations, understandings and cognitions of persons within cultures, stressing that "human societies may <u>require</u> the non-sharing of certain cognitive maps among

participants in a variety of institutional arrangements" (Wallace, 1961:39-40). If communicative styles and "systems of rules for teaching and learning" can be seen at the level of Wallace's "cultural contracts" (i.e., they are social behaviours) and if these contracts are possible because of "partial equivalent structures" such that behaviour is more or less predictable without extensive motivational or cognitive sharing, one is compelled to look at the nature of these contracts. Holzner (1972:68) discusses these contracts which "limit and structure the interaction context":

> Where frames of reference are disparate, but transactions are of necessity frequent, as in the csse of many laymen's relations to some expert, a supporting framework of social arrangemnts tends to arise which limits and structures the interaction context. Misunderstandings continue to occur but the limitations in the scope of interaction, and the distribution of power within it channel them so that their consequences remain socially acceptable. (emphasis mine)

Wallace's point that "disparate frames of reference" probably characterize all social interaction, suggests that seeing differences in the systems of rules for teaching and learning of different social groups does not explain differential schooling success or failure. Attention must be focused upon the arrangements by which social interaction is at all possible and, as Holzner suggests, the distribution of power is certainly an important factor in these arrangements.

By seeing classroom interaction as based upon contracts or on "supporting frameworks of social arrangements", efforts can be made to investigate the nature of such arrangements. The classroom is not an egalitarian situation where student definition of appropriateness or propriety is recognized as definitive of the situation. It is the teacher's criteria for appropropriateness which prevail. An

investigation of the areas over which teachers exert their power and control over students yields information about what Grimshaw calls the systems of rules of teaching and learning which are operative in classrooms. Some of these rules become apparent in looking at the kind of "norms" enforced by teachers [i.e., from Philips (1974:11): "...what is meaningful, what is appropriate, what is true and what is false...."], and by deducing the existance of rules by looking at apparent violations, which is similar to what Goffman does in describing the orderliness of social life. As the teacher has official control over classroom interaction, it is helpful to look at the areas over which teacher control is exerted.

Susan Philips' (1974:131) very useful description of the "orchestration" of classroom interaction suggests some of the areas in which teachers exert control.

1. Regulation of access to the situation. The teacher is the mediator between the world outside the classroom and the students within the classroom. She dictates who may enter and who may leave. Children must have her permission to do either. And anyone who enters the classroom must deal with her before they have any involvement with the students in the classroom

2. The initiation, maintenance and termination of focused involvements. The teacher determines who will engage with whom, and for how long. She sets up particular encounters and assigns particular students to engage in them. She dictates when and for what purposes the students may leave these involvements and when they will come to an end.

3. The internal regulation of ongoing involvements. The teacher determines who will talk, when they will talk, what they will talk about, and how long they will talk. She has similar authority over where and how the children will place and align their bodies and the object of their eye focus.

The third area over which it is stated that teachers have control is the one most extensively discussed by Philips in the description of the school on the Warm Springs Reservation in Oregon. The control over talk and kinesic behaviour of students in focused involvements is an important part of what is meant by classroom control; as noted before, students can become "mis-involved" in "...the self (one's own thoughts), an external non-person, or other persons...." or "...more often than not other students...." (Philips 1974:144). The teacher's bringing them back to the official focus of attention, through verbal or non-verbal direction is "discipline". Misinvolvement is described as "not paying attention" and it is a constant concern of teachers:

> "The foci to which children are assigned by teachers are those in which reside the things schools purport to teach. If a child is properly focused, it is still not certain that he is learning since his thoughts cannot be perceived. But if he is improperly focused, then it is clear (from the teacher's point of view) that he is <u>not</u> learning (Philips 1974:143).

Within focused involvements in classrooms in which the teacher is a participant, an important facet of control is talk regulation. How does the teacher determine who will talk, what they will talk about and how long they will talk? How will "talk infractions" be identified and how are they handled? Philips notes the right of the teacher to also direct the physical comportment of students. What do teachers demand, how will infractions be identified and how are infractions in the kinesic behaviour of students handled when they occur? With micro-analysis of interaction in a school, some of the above questions might be answered. Making explicit some of the "systems of rules" of classrooms, taking into account the power of the teacher to define those rules, will be seen as initially necessary in

further work which might address itself to a description of the experience of minority children in schools.

CHAPTER THREE

KEHEWIN RESERVE AND SCHOOL

The school at which data were collected is located on Kehewin Indian Reserve one hundred and fifty miles northeast of Edmonton. The reserve has a paved provincially-maintained highway cutting through one corner of its 29,415 acres of prairie and parkland; gravel roads maintained by the band make accessible the larger number of band members' homes not fronted on the highway. Small numbers of dwellings are clustered together on the reserve generally along kinship lines with some varying numbers of homes standing vacant as (usually) temporary migration to Edmonton or other centres for education or employment occurs. Band members spend a lot of time travelling: two service-centre towns are located within twenty miles of the reserve and as there are no commercial services available on the reserve, travel to these towns is necessary and frequent. Kehewin is generally considered by residents and outsiders to be a small reserve as its population in 1975 was between five and six hundred people. Many of the nearby reserves are much larger in area and population. These other Cree reserves are visited periodically by Kehewin band members as kin and friendship ties are strong across them. Sports events, bingoes, and more traditionally "Indian" events, sponsored by the reserves or the "white" communities nearby, are attended by area residents generally.

Kehewin children started attending provincial schools mainly in the nearby town of Bonnyville in large numbers in the early 1960's. Prior to that a school on the reserve had been in operation but had been poorly attended and many informants related that the teachers recruited for the school did not speak English and "beat the kids". In addition, a number of band members had attended Blue Quills Residential School some thirty miles away from Kehewin or other residential schools for Indians farther away.

Performance statistics for Kehewin children in the Bonnyville schools were typical for those of Indian students in Canada generally: age-grade retardation was high, attendance records were poor and failure and drop out rates were much higher than those of non-native students. These factors, the suspicion (or conviction) of band members that their children were subject to racism in the white schools, the growing belief among North American native people generally that schools should be locally controlled and "culturally appropriate", may all be seen as related to the demand for a reserve school in 1971.

The school at Kehewin has only been in operation since September, 1975. Its presence is a tangible result of a struggle initiated by the band in 1971 toward improving conditions on the reserve. On September 13, 1971, Kehewin and Cold Lake Reserves began what became for Cold Lake, a very long school boycott, protesting school facilities and living conditions on both reserves. At the time of a fact-finding mission (at the beginning of October, 1971) by a special assistant to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, it was estimated that 98% of the approximately five hundred Kehewin band members were unemployed, and the water supply and living conditions

of band members were in the assistant's words "appalling"; so appalling, in fact, that his visit was cut short so that an immediate report could be made to the Minister. Kehewin band members were also concerned about what they described as racially discriminatory attitudes toward Kehewin children in the provincial schools they were attending. Cold Lake was concerned about the inadequate and unhealthy physical facilities of their reserve school and about living conditions on the reserve. One of the major demands of the leadership of both reserves was that the Minister of Indian Affairs (then the Hon. Jean Chretien) come to their reserves to see conditions for himself. This the Minister repeatedly refused to do. The protest continued with a march on the St. Paul District Office of the Department and on October 28, 1971, approximately fifty people from Kehewin and Cold Lake Reserves and Saddle Lake Reserve (which supported the school boycott in part) occupied the Regional Office of the Department in Edmonton. The Edmonton Journal (Oct. 29, 1971) reported that the Indians intended to "camp there as long as it takes to get Chretien to meet them on their reserves or at least meet their demands for improvements". The Minister was reported in the Edmonton Journal (Oct. 27, 1971) to have called the boycott "political blackmail and unacceptable to the government" and in response to Kehewin's demand for a reserve school said: "...it would be turning back the clock to build new schools on reserves." Nevertheless, on November 19, 1971, after a secret meeting in Winnipeg between the chiefs of the striking reserves and the Minister, the chief of Kehewin announced he was ending the Kehewin strike and that the Minister had agreed to build a school which would provide kindergarten to grade three on the reserve. It was announced on December 31, 1971, that

construction of the new school would begin in about two weeks with completion scheduled for September, 1972. Another result of negotiations was "...to have the Department provide the assistance and funds which would enable the Bands to more actively participate in their own development." (Gobeil 1974:ii)

Operationally, the commitment to development meant a substantial increase in Department funding to Kehewin, the setting up of various surveys and workshops with government personnel and band leadership to determine community needs and desires in the area of development, feasibility studies and finally, the establishment of a number of programs whereby reserve welfare dependence was to be lowered. Labour-intensive industries were located on the reserve--a portable sawmill, a weaving factory and a steel fabrication shop. In addition, a number of people were employed in a new-house building project and in various social service capacities. It is not the purpose of this study to examine in any detail the broad development plans of Kehewin or their subsequent implementation. It is appropriate to note that in 1975 it was reported that between 50 and 75% of the people employed on the reserve in 1972 had returned to welfare as the employment available in 1972 proved to be quite short term. It is also appropriate to note that the school scheduled to open in September, 1972, opened, in fact, in September, 1975.

Various plans were considered in reference to the construction and staffing of the school. It was finally agreed that an architect of native ancestry would plan the school and in the spring of 1975, an Education Director, a white educator who had had some previous experience in Indian schools, was hired to implement the educational

program in which the Band Council was interested. In addition, a Band Councillor was designated as being primarily responsible for educational matters with the expectation that he personally might assume the position of Education Director at some time in the future. The school was established as a private school, funded by Indian Affairs but totally administered by band government and the Education Director. The School Committee of Kehewin, established in 1968, was not particularly active when children attended the Bo[redacted]ille schools, nor has it had much input into the present administration of Kehewin School. Other reserves have used School Committees to achieve a measure of community control over their children's schooling; Kehewin has not utilized its School Committee in this way.

The school's physical arrangments can be seen to be fairly atypical for rural schools. The architect's working plans and comments by school staff emphasize that the school's large windows, skylights, its open-beamed ceiling resembling the inside of a tipi and its pie-shaped classrooms were consistent with the stated objective of allowing Indian children to learn in the context of their own culture ["...a natural setting reflecting the Indians' traditional closeness with nature..." (Cardinal 1973:3)]. Two classrooms in particular are very large with a high degree of movement required as teachers direct various interactional arrangements.

The school is planned to become the centre of a complex of service agencies which the band wishes to provide for itself. Already a small wing of the school is used as a Health Clinic where a nurse and community health worker treat school children. Planning is underway at this time for a Recreation Arena and office space for

band government and there are more long range plans to open commercial services as part of a reserve village. At present, within close proximity to the school are a number of older buildings used for band government offices, a day care centre, a band hall, a weaving factory and a women's club.

The teachers in the school were hired shortly after the Education Director assumed his duties. The four provincially professionally certified non-Indian teachers had all worked with the Education Director at another Indian school. The Cree, the Kindergarten and the Culture teachers and two other teaching assistants (not professionally certified by the province) are members of the Kehewin band, speak Cree and are closely related to at least some of the children attending the school. The distinction between teacher and teacher aide is purposely blurred at Kehewin School; all personnel are officially referred to as "teachers". Because the school is private, the traditional status-distinctions and labour and responsibility divisions maintained in federal and provincial schools between teachers and aides, need not be so rigid and the Director is adamant that a "democratic ideology" is extant in the school. I have designated two of the Cree adults working in the School as "teaching assistants" only as a result of my own oberservations. These persons taught students only on the very explicit directions of certified teachers and usually did not have exclusive responsibility for either large blocks of times with students (which would entail detailed pre-planning) or for subjects (as the Cree teacher did). None of the Cree teachers (except the kindergarten

teacher) working in the school had the same sort of responsibilities for a "home-room" of students. Queries students made regarding special privileges, etc. to Cree personnel were always redirected: "Ask your teacher" (meaning the home-room certified teacher). Operationally, Kehewin school is not now unique in its staffing arrangements as many federal and provincial schools in Alberta have native language teachers, native kindergarten teachers and teacher aides of native ancestry. The Cree adults who worked in the school were frequently approached by certified staff for advice on "how to deal with the people" or for information regarding the home situations of some students. These informational requests could be seen to be somewhat polarizing as certified teachers (none of whom lived on the reserve) were not fully cognizant of kin networks and sometimes asked for information that the Cree teachers were reluctant to divulge to outsiders. On other occasions, the "dealing with the people" questions were opportunities for joking. At a staff meeting a Cree teacher who was asked if parents would allow teachers in their homes for home visits, asserted: "The days are gone when us Indians would go out in thirty below weather to talk to a whiteman. We learned to say come in."

The school had 95 students registered in September 1975. These students were age- and ability-grouped on the basis of standardized tests administered in September, 1975 and on the basis of informal (certified) teacher evaluations. The six groups, including the kindergarten, were officially ungraded; however, with the use of sequential textbooks, an official grade placement of students was certainly evident and understood by teachers and students.

The school is designated as elementary and its graduates are expected to proceed to Grade 7 at a Bonnyville school. Although the school purports to be a "native" school, because it is conceived of as preparing students for junior high in a provincial school, the Education Director and teachers feel any radical departures from the Alberta school curriculum are precluded.

Observations were recorded in the school a total of nine weeks: one week was spent in the school in December, 1975 and the remainder was in April, May and June, 1976. Videotaping was carried out over five weeks at the school with most of the preserved tape filmed during the final observation week. The machinery was used frequently with the various groups of children and teachers primarily to familiarize them and the researcher with it. All teachers were extremely co-operative in allowing their classes to be observed or taped and little apprehension was expressed about having the researcher or the machinery present. This lack of reluctance to permit taping was particularly remarkable when it is noted that in all preserved tape, the machinery and/or the observer can easily be seen to have been a focus of attention for at least some children for variable lengths of time. Teachers were aware of this threat to the official focus of attention from previous taping sessions and still were willing to allow observations to be made.

Both field notes and preserved tape were used as data in the analysis of interaction at Kehewin School. Several writers (Birdwhistell 1970; McDermott 1976; Erickson and Schultz 1977; et al) advocate the use of some form of audial and visual recording in doing micro-analysis of forms of social situations; their analyses use

empirical data such as quantifiable shifts in body alignment, duration of pauses, changes in voice pitch etc. and link these to more theoretical concerns such as interactional competence, the "production of a social occasion" (Erickson and Schultz 1977:7) or more broadly, the social organization of situations.

The following analysis differs from those discussed above in assumptions about social situations, and therefore, the purpose of analysis and methodology. The second chapter of this thesis discusses briefly the limitations of an approach which sees actors in social situations as unconstrained, and more particularly, the error of seeing teachers and students in classrooms as co-producers of classroom events. This analysis looks at the differential power of teachers vis-a-vis students in controlling the production of classroom events.

Consequently, videotaped material was not coded for empirically verifiable verbal and non-verbal behaviour of teacher and students. For my purposes, attempts to describe interaction empirically and exhaustively would not be useful. Rather, videotaped data was used as an extension of field notes to re-observe classroom interaction.

CHAPTER FOUR

TEACHER - STUDENT INTERACTION AT KEHEWIN SCHOOL

In keeping with the perspective outlined in Chapter Two, in the following descriptions of interaction at Kehewin School, I attempt to explain some school interaction in terms of the power and control a teacher has by virtue of his/her position as a differentially defined participant, i.e., as a teacher. The lack of concern with problems of power in much micro-analysis has already been noted; arguments have been presented to show that the concept of power is absolutely necessary for description and analysis of classroom interaction. Description of events within this perspective includes the corollary phenomenon of power as descriptive adequacy requires that a discussion of power be made explicit.

In doing this ethnography of interaction, it has been necessary to employ a great deal of terminology in which distinctions apparently meaningful to teachers are used. This is not to suggest that these distinctions are non-problematic or empirically verifiable; "too many students", "too much noise", "proper" physical demeanor are teacher judgements which reflect some individual variation. Teachers use these terms in conversation with each other or students as if they were non-problematic. To point out their basis in teacher judgements, the text of this description will use the convention of initially setting them off with quotation marks.

I have selected the interaction in classrooms of four teachers primarily for analysis, although there were other teachers and classrooms of students in the school. These four teachers expressed the least reluctance about having the observer present and consequently, more time was spent in these classrooms.

Certified Teacher - Primary Students

A description of classroom arrangements where a non-native certified teacher is involved with "first grade"[1] students makes clear some of the control procedures and those types of behaviour over which control is exerted at Kehewin School. This description is of a typical arrangement for this teacher and group of students; with minor variations, this class took place every day for about an hour. The class was titled Language Arts. Students were in two groups with one group listening to a taperecording of a teacher giving instructions about how to complete a phonics exercise and the other group worked with the classroom teacher who gave instructions about how to complete the same exercise. The exercise took about a half hour to complete and upon completion, the groups switched their focus -- those with the tape recording went to the teacher and vice versa and the exercise was repeated. Variation from these arrangements might have included the absence of one or more students from either group or the (infrequent) presence of a teaching assistant who listened to the tape with the students and supervised their written responses.

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[1] As noted in Chapter Two, Kehewin School is, for official purposes, ungraded while grade placement of students for instructional purposes is commonly employed.

This teacher used this sort of exercise and interactional arrangement regularly. With some departmentalization of subjects in the large primary classroom where she, another certified teacher and a teaching assistant worked, she was responsible for the Language Arts Program of the "second and third grade" students as well and they were assigned precisely the same mimeographed exercise sheets in the same interactional arrangements as the first year students. The exercises consisted of the teacher or the tape recording presenting phonemic combinations for which students had to write graphemic representations (an example would include a sheet on consonant clusters beginning with "s") and words which were incomplete and were completed by students writing in the "missing" sounds. Using the same exercises with older students was regarded as appropriate because the teacher judged them not to have mastered this "basic phonics" in their previous schooling.

Because this teacher so often assigned students to these specific interactional arrangments, regularities in her demands and control procedures became very evident. She spent a great deal of time and placed much emphasis on the physical placement and demeanor of students, particularly at the beginning but also throughout their encounters with her. The official encounter with her did not begin until children were "properly" focused and would not continue if children were not properly focused. Focusing seemed to be in terms of forming the "ecological huddle" which Goffman speaks of with students in a circle around a table aligning their bodies toward the

table and their eye gaze toward the teacher.[2] This correct physical placement and demeanor was expected to be known to students as the teacher often signalled the beginning of an encounter with her with "Class, I'm waiting!", whereupon students assumed proper demeanor. "Infractions" were corrected primarily through touch: the teacher approached students and in a gentle but firm manner, either pushed them forward to get them aligned to write or would sometimes just touch a student's arm and catch his/her eye. Very rarely, almost never, in fact, was the teacher observed to verbally direct students to what she defined as correct physical comportment. Student interaction with other students or inappropriate physical alignment was terminated by the teacher approaching and/or touching the offending students. "Major" infractions, such as not being present at one of the two tables, were not frequent and verbal reprimand could be seen as unnecessary partly because students knew so well the expectations of the teacher. They knew which group they belonged to, where each group was to be initially focused and the termination of the involvements was predictable to them upon either completion of the tape or completion of the exercise with the teacher. This non-verbal style of controlling student behaviour was typical for this teacher.

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[2] In speaking of the multi-channel redundancy of communication and the assumptions people make about how an integration of channels is effected, Philips (1974:270) notes: "...we assume that persons who are attending to visually received messages are unlikely to fully comprehend the verbal messages, so that sustained direction of gaze away from conversational encounters is treated as inattention."

Another method she (and others) used for control was prolonged glances.[3] When offenders became aware of these prolonged glances, they realigned themselves (if the infraction was physical) or terminated encounters with other students (if therein lay the infraction).

Physical infractions which were so defined by the teacher included student attempts to vary their body positions by, for example, half-lying on tables or leaning far back on their chairs, looking out the window or getting "too close" to another student. These attempts were disallowed by the teacher most successfully with the children who were working at her table; those working at the tape recorder were farther away and the touch or look methods she commonly employed were somewhat more difficult to accomplish with those students although she periodically got up and realigned students at the tape recording table. The importance of correct physical demeanor was illustrated by this teacher's insistence upon the physical participation of one student who never fully participated in the exercises other students did. This boy had not spoken to any of the certified teachers in the nine months he had been at school and he rarely spoke to the Cree teachers or other students. He usually drew pictures on the backs of the exercise sheets he was given. This was explicitly allowed, and indeed demanded by the teacher. The drawing of pictures, defined by the teacher as "misinvolvement" for other students at most times, was this student's task. Although this

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[3]Prolonged glances seem to be an important control resource for teachers where correction is accomplished without speech. All certified teachers in the school employed the prolonged glance method. The videocamera could be seen as another "teacher eye" when it became evident that camera direction could terminate what students felt to be inappropriate student involvements.

student was not a full participant in any of the classroom encounters, he had to be present with his group, correctly aligned, and at times of choral reading -- although he could not or did not read -- he had to hold a book and focus his eyes upon it as did the other children.

Another feature of this teacher's regularity of style in interaction with children was the limited range of topics which were verbally attended to in encounters. The exercise was the only topic of conversation and other student initiated topics were ignored or disallowed by the teacher. Some children's occasional attempts to make the exercise words meaningful were ignored or very hastily corrected. An example is the following interchange:

Teacher: The word is "law". Make "law".
Student: I'll walk down the law.
Teacher: No. A policeman is the law and order man.
Student: If I go to jail, I'm in the law? (rising intonation)
Teacher: Next word! Write "saw".

During one taping session, a student commented upon my presence a number of times, asked for clarification about my presence ("Is that lady gonna be a teacher" Is that lady gonna sing?") and asked where an absent student was a number of times. None of these comments or questions became integrated into the official flow of conversation with teacher ratification or comment[4] and typically, the teacher would reiterate an exercise question after what seemed to be an

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[4]Philips (1974:87) notes the importance of this ratification or legitimation of a "turn at talk":

> "Because an addressed recipient sometimes neither attends to nor responds to a speaker who has designated him as addressed recipient the number of times a person speaks will not necessarily be equivalent to the number of times his speaking is ratified or legitimated by others."

Teacher ratification of a student initiation incorporates this initiation into the official structure of classroom interaction.

inappropriate student initiation. This is not an example of teacher tyranny but is a typical pedagogical strategy. Students were rarely observed to ask questions about the exercises or make comments about them except to engage in a kind of competition between groups: some children working with the teacher would periodically get up, run to the tape-recording table and see how far along in the exercise those children were and then comment upon their progress (e.g., "We gotta hurry up!"). The basis upon which the teacher would allow or disallow this movement behaviour was not particularly evident (disallowing most commonly by getting up and pushing students toward or down onto their chairs). The fact that this movement behaviour was sometimes allowed made judgement of it as an infraction requiring correction appear somewhat capricious. Philips (1974:150) notes that the efforts of children to communicate with each other entails some risk-taking and knowledge of how to maintain "dominant" and "subordinate" involvements in classroom interaction. Goffman's distinction between "main" and "side" and "dominant" and "subordinate" involvements makes clear some of the interactional complexities which become known to children:

> A main involvement is one that absorbs the major part of an individual's attention and interest, visibly forming the principal current determination of his actions. A side involvement is an activity that an individual can carry out in an abstracted fashion without threatening or confusing simultaneous maintenance of a main involvement. Whether momentary of continuous, simple or complicated, these side activities appear to constitute a fuguelike disassociation of minor muscular activity from the main line of an individual's action. Humming while working and knitting while listening are examples.
>
> Along with the distinction between main and side involvements, we must make another that can be easily confused with the first. We must distinguish between dominant and subordinate involvements. A dominant involvement is one whose claims

> upon an individual the social occasion obliges him to be ready to recognize; a subordinate involvement is one he is allowed to sustain only to the degree, and during the time, that his attention is patently not required by the involvement that dominates him. Subordinate involvements are sustained in a muted, modulated and intermittent fashion, expressing in their style a continuous regard and deference for the official dominating activity at hand. (Goffman 1968:43-44)

The haste with which children left their seats to ascertain how far along in the exercise the other group was and then returned to their seats may be seen as a recognition of the claims of the dominant involvement -- the exercise doing -- upon them. The teacher seemed to define the movement behaviour as infractory and requiring correction when the dominant involvement was most seriously threatened, i.e., when "too many" students got up or when they spent "too much" time looking at the work of other students. Certainly part of what students learn in schools is how to sustain side involvements[5] and they become more adept at judging what is likely to result when a side involvement becomes recognized by a teacher.

This same teacher was observed teaching Music to students: this involved grouping on a larger scale with all the primary students. The teacher led the group in choral singing and played the piano, around which the children sat. In terms of this teacher's customary rigidity of control, these classes were very interesting to analyze. With her back to the students, one of her control methods, prolonged eye gaze was physically difficult. Students sat bunched together on

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[5] Some Kindergarten students were observed to check the eye gaze direction of teachers before engaging in interaction with other students during "Story Time", for example, when the official focus of attention was the teacher's reading of a story. This monitoring of teacher gaze direction enabled students to engage in side involvements being reprimanded.

the floor around the piano, carefully placed by the teacher at the beginning of the class but considerably rearranged throughout the lesson. Because the teacher's mobility was lessened with children sitting tightly around the piano, another of the teacher's customary control methods, touch, was also made more problematic. I suspect also that the definition of the situation in a Music class is somewhat different from that assigned to subjects like Reading or Mathematics. Although students are still assigned to involvement in an encounter which involves singing and because of this assignment "...there is understood to be some reasonable cause for alienation" (Philips 1974:141), this encounter is more like those encounters analyzed by Goffman in "Fun in Games"; that is, singing is, or should be fun and should be engaged in for that sole purpose. Goffman states that in a fun-encounter, misinvolvement cannot usually be attended to explicitly as that attention destroys what is officially the definition of the encounter. Music, as conceptualized by teachers, should be fun and should not be an occasion upon which children's attention should be alienated. In any case, student involvements during these classes were frequent and sustained for long periods of time without teacher termination. The correction which did occur was stylistically typical for this teacher: if student-initiated involvements became "too loud" or involved so many students that few were singing, she would turn around on the piano bench and just look at students. If students engaged in their own involvements did not cease these involvements during one of these gaze periods, the teacher would get up and touch or move offenders (again, with little or no verbal reprimand).

In summary, this teacher was concerned with the kinesic behaviour of students and defined "correct" kinesic demeanor very narrowly. Her correction of what she defined as infractory behaviour was most typically accomplished non-verbally. Further, the definers of appropriate topics of verbal communication were not students; the teacher (and only the teacher) could ratify or legitimate student verbal initiations, and in so doing, incorporated or did not incorporate these initiations into the official structure of classroom interaction. It was apparent that the range of topics which were so legitimated were very narrowly defined and that the definer was always the teacher.

Certified Teacher B - Kindergarten Students

Consistent with what appears to be a teacher definition of young children in particular as inappropriate movers, the other certified teacher in the primary classroom was also very deliberate in her spatial placement of students and spent a great deal of time before beginning focused involvements placing the students. Her style of direction, in contrast to that of the teacher just described, was much more verbal and admonishments to sit up straight, face the teacher, sit here or there, look here or there, etc., were very common and almost continual.

Part of every morning was spent by this teacher in the Kindergarten classroom with a non-certified Cree teacher. The non-certified Cree teacher was alone with the Kindergarten students for about an hour every morning, during which time she read the children a story and set up materials so the children could engage in what was called "Free "Play". During the time the certified teacher was

also present, an English as a second language program, "Distar", was the focus of attention of the students and the teacher for about twenty minutes. The Distar program presents pictures and sentences (which the teacher models and children repeat) and also question and answer drills with the teacher invariably asking the questions and the students replying individually or chorally. With verbal behaviour being so highly structured by the program itself (the Distar Teacher's Guide suggests how many choral answers to elicit before asking for individual responses, for example) these lessons became highly stylized and regularities in student behaviour and teacher control became very apparent.

As previously, spatial placement of students for the language lesson appeared very important. The teacher and the uncertified teacher spent at least five minutes seating children on chairs in a particular corner of the room. Children made concerted efforts to sit where they pleased (usually next to a friend) within the general boundaries of the huddle. These efforts were generally allowed if students in these usually two-person groups did not seem "too involved" in them at the beginning of the lesson-encounter. If involvement increased (very often children sat hugging and/or poking one another) and this was noticed by the teacher, the teacher would verbally direct one of the children to move. Sometimes, children would try to carry on subordinate involvements like drawing on the board or playing with small toys they could reach from where they were sitting. I have called these subordinate involvements because they were always terminated by the teacher if they were noticed. Playing with a small toy while engaged in listening and verbally

responding might be seen in some encounters as a side involvement ["...an activity that an individual can carry out in an abstracted fashion without threatening or confusing simultaneous maintenance of a main involvement ...those side activities appear to constitute a fuguelike disassociation of muscular activity from the mainline of person's action...." (Goffman 1968:43)] but in this particular classroom encounter, the teacher defined these activities as threatening the dominant involvement and on those grounds, terminated them.

Partly as a result of the fact that the Distar Language program is so highly structured in terms of verbal behaviour on the part of the teacher and the students, topics of verbal address within these encounters were as narrowly defined as in the Language Arts lessons described previously. The choral responses of the students were loud and sing-songish -- a stacatto rhythm being maintained by teacher hand movements. Children appeared to enjoy this opportunity to speak very loudly and shouted out responses in chorus. The question and answer drills moved very quickly and student initiation or verbal comment other than that elicited by the teacher would have had to be very loud and rapid to be even heard by the teacher or other students. Students did not often initiate in this way; rather, their own initiated involvements tended to be physical or in the form of whispered comments to each other.

Both the presentation of new and review material of these language lessons was observed. Children tended to have difficulty with the answers to new questions. For example, children had a lot of difficulty answering the very urban-oriented questions in a unit about houses. Answers were usually volunteered by children but

these were most often defined by the teacher as inappropriate or incorrect. The following exchange was typical:

Teacher: What kind of rooms are in a house?
Student: A couch!
Teacher: A COUCH? (Exaggerated eyebrow raise and widened eyes)
Many Students: NOOO!
Teacher: A house has a kitchen. A house has a bathroom. Children, repeat!

After some days of the teacher repeatedly modelling: "A house has a_____; a house has a_____;", children responded to the question "What kind of rooms are in a house?" with the teacher-modelled sentences in the same sing-songish intonation with which they responded to other questions.[6]

Teacher and student interaction in this classroom points out another feature of teacher control. Goffman seems to assume that dominant, main, subordinate and side involvements are either co-defined by participants in an interactive situation or they are defined by "rules" over and above particular situations. This may be so in some encounters; it is not the case in classrooms. In classrooms, teachers define what sort of verbal and non-verbal behaviours peripheral to the main or dominant involvement will be allowed. Through manipulation of the physical placement of students in classroom encounters, this teacher tried to minimize the likelihood

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[6]The apparent "emptiness" of such stylized verbal behaviour became evident on one occasion when I was asked to take over the language lesson as the regular teacher was absent. The Distar lessons just covered had emphasized prepositional phrases of place beginning with "over" and "under". Children had responded appropriately for several days when asked questions about pictures in the teacher manual. Since the children were playing outside with a bat and ball just prior to the language lesson I was to teach, I used these props to elicit sentences using "over" and "under". Children did not generally respond with the appropriate prepositions

of threatening involvements occuring. It became evident that it was her definition of "threatening" which prevailed.

Cree Teacher

The Cree teacher, the uncertified teacher who was resident on the reserve and taught Cree at Kehewin School, did not have a sequentially graded text from which to work as did the Kindergarten teacher teaching English. She worked with her own prepared materials with all the students in the school (except the Kindergarten) coming to her in their five age - and ability-groups for about three hours a week per group. Different materials were used with the different groups of students. Variation in fluency and knowledge of Cree was apparent between and within groups. Older children and particularly boys, spoke much more Cree in this class (and outside the class in their other classrooms and on the playground) than did younger (and female) children. Instructions for classroom management and task assignment were given by the teacher almost wholly in Cree to the two oldest groups of children and almost entirely in English to the three younger groups.

Darnell (1971) has described the complexity of varieties spoken in a bilingual speech community, Calling Lake, Alberta. Although Kehewin has been in contact with a larger number of English speakers for a longer period of time than has Calling Lake (road accessibility from the service centre "white" town of Athabasca to Calling Lake was extremely hazardous until about ten years ago and

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with these stimuli and appeared very unsure about what was being asked. Nor did they use the appropriate prepositions in their conversations with each other in the classroom.

the number of English speakers resident in the community was very limited until about the same time), there are still some elderly and very young monolingual Cree speakers on the Kehewin reserve. The range of competence in Cree and English noted at Calling Lake is also descriptive of the situation at Kehewin: very few speakers at Kehewin speak Standard English and many Cree speakers speak an anglicized variety of Cree. Darnell suggests that the stylization of content in everyday conversation permits comprehensibility between speakers who do not share precisely the same linguistic code. Certainly, content in classroom conversation becomes sufficiently stylized for children to understand their peers and teachers even though the same linguistic code is not shared by all. In the Cree classroom observed, whether instructions were given in Cree or English to students, adaptations could be made by the teacher as she was quite aware of the range of competency in Cree within a group of students. For example, one older class of students, for whom instructions were usually given in Cree, contained a Chipewyan child who had been recently adopted by a Kehewin family. On the infrequent occasions when a classroom instruction was so complex as to not be understood by this student, it was repeated by the teacher in English. Children also accomodated to each other's competence in Cree or English with frequent switching of Cree and English lexical items within utterances. The following exchange was typical. A. spoke Cree often in interaction with other students. B. spoke more frequently in English. B. had just returned from a visit to the dentist.

A: Does your face still tomache tan?
B: Uhhh?
A: Does your face still feel funny?
B: Eha. Apsis. (Yes. A little.)

The Cree teacher's interaction with beginning students in what was officially a Cree class was very interesting in terms of the amount of speaking children did, the topics and the language of those conversations. All these classes were typically characterized by a high amount of student initiation of topics, extended verbalization of students (telling the teacher stories, dreams, reports of accidents, dances and other community and domestic activities), and the language of those conversations was almost exclusively English. The teacher listened, made comments, asked further clarification questions and generally, recognized student initiations. At some point, the lesson began, with the teacher approaching the blackboard or a chart and in a distinctively louder voice than was used in conversation, asking a question or making a statement. Often the teacher presented pictures of animals, buildings etc. and asked for labels from students ["Kikwey awa?" (What is this)] Some sentence modelling was also done [e.g., Teacher: "Papahakwan awa. OK?" (This is a chicken. OK?) Students: "Papahakwan awa".] Especially with younger students, songs or hymns in Cree were sung. Student initiation of topics did not end when the lesson began nor did student self-selection of their physical placement in the classroom cease while the oral lesson was going on. Children moved closer to the charts or the teacher to see, to point out something interesting in the pictures or to engage in private conversation with the teacher. In many classrooms a report time is set aside as a special time in which

children can engage in the kind of conversation which children in the Cree classroom engaged in at most times; there is an expectation, however, that such reports will be terminated when the lesson begins. This termination was not apparent in the Cree classroom now discussed.

Sometimes, children were given individual tasks to complete which involved most commonly students writing words in their notebooks, drawing pictures, or with older students, writing words in Cree syllabics. During these times, control over student behaviour by the teacher, in terms of keeping students focussed upon their tasks was apparent, with the teacher approaching individual students to check on their progress, help them or directing their focus to the task. At these times, mis-involvement could be identified by its termination by the teacher. These mis-involvements were usually physical infractions: children leaving their seats for other areas of the room, eating their lunches or poking and play-fighting with other children. Verbal interactions with other students were sometimes, but rarely terminated -- these conversations were usually very quiet and apparently not defined as "disruptive" or infractory by the teacher.

In Chapter Two, it was stated that classroom infractions are corrected only by the teacher. This Cree classroom was unique in terms of the number of adults present in the room in that at most times, another Cree woman, her position defined as "Culture teacher", worked in the room primarily on developing curriculum materials for the Cree classes. This woman had been an important community leader prior to the opening of the school and was somewhat older than the teacher of Cree. Sometimes, infractions would be corrected by her,

although she worked in a corner of the classroom quite removed from where the main teacher-student interaction was going on. This correction was particularly frequent when older children were receiving Cree instruction and she would typically leave her desk, approach the tables at which children sat and publically scold the infractors. This scolding typically consisted of naming the infractory student(s), identifying the infraction and discoursing at length about why the infraction should not have been committed. The infractions were defined by her as "acting silly", "being ashamed to speak our language" (if students were slow to volunteer answers to teacher-asked questions), or "disturbing the class" (if students were so engaged in student-student interactions that they did not respond to teacher directives). All her scolding was done in English. This scolding could be seen to be fairly effective: children who were the addressed receivers [those "...to whom the speaker's attention or words are most explicitly directed..." (Philips, 1974: 162)] immediately ceased their infractory behaviour and the witnesses ["...hearers whose attention is similarly defined as requisite but who are not addressees..." (Philips 1974:163)] kept a respectful silence during and for some time after the public scolding. This scolding was very different in style from the correctional methods used by the regular teacher who did not usually scold at length but typically would only call out an infractory student's name without identifying or discussing the infraction.

The fact that children were sometimes more successful in this classroom to get the teacher to talk about what they wanted to talk about and were somewhat freer in their kinesic behaviour than in

other classrooms in the school does not negate what has already been said about the teacher's right to control students' behaviour. The observation that the Cree teacher appeared to have less limited definitions of appropriate classroom behaviours is only a comparative observation. Children did not define appropriateness in this classroom; simply, more of what children did was not deemed inappropriate to the point of requiring correction by the teacher or correction was somewhat more problematic for the teacher to achieve. The Kindergarten teacher, who was also Cree and who also had not received any formally-credentialled teacher training, indicated a number of times to the certified teacher with whom she worked and to the researcher, a dissatisfaction with her own "control procedures"[7]. Attempts were certainly made by Cree personnel in the school to control the behaviour of children and the efforts of certified staff to control children were noted with approbation by them. Students whose behaviour was defined as grossly infractory were very commonly sent by Cree personnel to the Education Director for "disciplining," i.e., punishment. Control, therefore can be seen to be important to all teachers; methods of handling children are certainly variable as is the effectiveness of various methods of control.

Certified Teacher C - "Sixth Grade" Students

I would finally like to describe some interaction in the classroom of the certified teacher who worked exclusively with the

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[7] For example, on one occasion when Kindergarten children were noisily milling about an entrance at some distance away from the Kindergarten teacher, she remarked to the certified teacher, "Look at them. I need your voice".

oldest group of children in the school. Prior to Christmas, 1975, this older group of children was taught by a number of teachers with subject departmentalization in an open-area classroom but this arrangement had been changed prior to preliminary observation in December, 1975, because of this teacher's dissatisfaction with the system. This teacher had expressed great discomfort with departmentalization based partly on her perceptions of the children at the beginning of the school term. She described them as "hard to control", "hostile", not at all like Indian children she had taught elsewhere, aggressively verbal and disobedient. She had felt initially that a more stable system, where she taught one group of students exclusively, would help her to "get to know the students better" and by April, 1976, she felt that this intuition had been borne out. She was much more satisfied with having a contained classroom and with teaching this group of students all subjects, except Cree. She felt the change had also been good for the students as she observed "their attitudes are much better now and they like school".

I discuss interaction in this classroom lastly because, on cursory examination, it appears that interaction there is even more "egalitarian" than in the lessons taught by the Cree teacher. Students in this classroom were the oldest group in the school and although sixth grade students might be socially defined by many urban teachers as still "children", this teacher is sensitive to the fact that in many Indian communities, a young adolescent has often acquired many "adult" skills and this growing competence effects the community's definition of him/her and his/her definition of self. It is believed that the kinds of control exercised over children is

somewhat different than that exercised over young adults by teachers and the teacher now discussed spoke often of the different sorts of strategies used with older children. I would like to show, however, that even students who are defined as young adults did not, in the classroom situation, have control over their own interaction and that the teacher, while in some senses allowed students greater autonomy in classroom behaviour, officially had ultimate and final control over what went on there.

Generally, this teacher did not spend a great deal of time directing the physical placement of students for the most common sorts of classroom encounters. The L-shaped arrangement of desks, with boys forming one line and girls the other, was customary at most times. Students occasionally moved their desks slightly out of the L and the teacher occasionally set up special seating arrangements of students for encounters such as "reading groups". The special seating arrangements were set up exclusively when the teacher was a participant in an encounter; radically different arrangement of desks could not be initiated by students and if a student had gradually inched his/her desk "too far" out of line with the L, the teacher directed him (the student was usually a male) back to the customary arrangement. Rarely were classroom infractions physical demeanor infractions; sometimes a student was observed to leave his desk and either try to leave the classroom (a large window at the front of the classroom made events in the library and hallways visible to students) or to wander about the room. If these attempts were seen by the teacher, the student was scolded and told to sit down.

Differential amounts of student talk were noted along sex lines in this classroom. Boys tended to initiate verbal interactions with the teacher, make public comments on ongoing events, ask public questions of the teacher or each other, more commonly than did girls. Girls' conversations tended to be quiet and private with each other and they tended to wait for the teacher to approach them instead of summoning her for assistance with their written assignments. Boys also engaged in a great amount of public word play, joking and non-linguistic noise-making. The very freqent questioning, joking, commenting, summoning and noise-making of the boys seemed usually to be defined as legitimate, or at least, not to be totally suppressed, by the teacher. The times at which this extensive verbalizing of students were defined as inappropriate by the teacher were not frequent. Public joking during times when children were engaged in individual written assignments particularly appeared to be permissible and the teacher often switched focus from working with an individual child to laugh or comment upon a public joke. Questions about how to complete assignments were also most often regarded as appropriate and certain students were very successful in getting the teacher's attention when they asked procedural questions. Because the teacher had identified a range of ability of students in the classroom, she had, to some extent, grouped them for instruction. Therefore, for subjects like Reading and Mathematics, which occupied most mornings, students worked in usually two-person groups in a variety of textbooks. General, whole-class instructions could not be given when students worked on such diverse assignments. Procedural questions were therefore defined as legitimate and they

were frequent. The teacher defined procedural questions as inappropriate during tests or when she perceived students to be insincere in their clarification questions, i.e., if they "just wanted attention" or if they "were stalling so they don't have to work".

This teacher was notable in the extent to which she allowed students to discuss community events in the classroom. For example, a number of forest fires in May 1976 on unleased government land near the reserve had forced much game down onto reserve pasture land. During one week there had been numerous bear sightings and a bear had been shot by a band member. The fires and the animals were constant topics of conversation for adults on the reserve and children spent much of their recess times discussing what was to be done, where the fires had spread, etc. Only in the Cree classroom and the now-discussed classroom did any conversation with teachers occur about these events. The interchange with this teacher was brief, however, and terminated by her exhorting students to "get back to work".

Some attempts were made by the teacher to get the generally quieter female students to talk. In reading groups she tried to elicit conversation about community and/or domestic events but these attempts were usually unsuccessful. On one occasion, when girls were about to read an account of a moon landing by astronauts, the teacher prefaced the story with: "Do the Crees have any legends about the moon?". None of the girls responded and all looked highly uncomfortable The teacher pressed for some time with individual girls and then gave up and continued with the round robin reading of the story.

Students appeared to be quite aware of the relative quietness of the girls in the classroom and made comments about this. On one occasion, one of the most verbal girls admonished another for reading

orally very quietly with: "Howcum you don't talk? You do outside."; boys occasionally made comments about the "shyness" of the girls, who did, however, engage in a great deal of conversation, with each other, while their conversations with the teacher were brief, infrequent and at the teacher's initiation.. Because of this infrequency and brevity of conversation with the teacher, girls were defined as quiet and shy. Having the teacher as the addressed receiver of verbal interaction seems to be important and indeed requisite in distinguishing "shy" from "verbal" students.

Students were, on one occasion, left unsupervised for a day while the teacher was absent. This non-supervision occurred with the sanction of the teacher; getting substitute teachers at Kehewin was difficult and the teacher told the Education Director that her students were quite capable of "handling themselves for a day". A group of students, all but one of whom were girls, spent most of the day selecting, rehearsing and making costumes for a play. Most of the rehearsing for the play was done in a quiet hallway of the school, while students not involved in the play stayed mainly in their classroom playing with puzzles and other classroom materials. When the teacher returned the next day, students involved in the play were very eager to perform it for the class. The teacher assumed control of the activity, directed students to speak louder, stand here or there, face the audience, etc. and students who had, the day before, been highly involved in directing each other in the play, showed what Goffman calls "alienation from interaction" in their performance for the class. They "flooded out" ["...the individual may allow his manner to be inundated by a flow of affect

that he no longer makes a show of concealing." (Goffman 1961:55)] with embarassment and engaged in "collusive byplays" with members of the audience (these byplays are noted by Goffman to be furtive and are engaged in so that some participants in the encounter become aware that persons initiating byplays are alienated from the encounter for whatever reasons). Students performing the play were practically inaudible, rushed through their lines, and did not engage in any of the dramatic stage business they had practised the day before. The teacher interrupted the play a number of times to direct students' delivery of lines and movement. On any criteria, with an audience which included the teacher as director, the play was quite different from what it had been the day before. Members of the cast made observations to that effect to each other after the play in private conversations on the playground.

Susan Philips (1972:379) notes:

> When students control and direct the interaction in small group projects... there is again a marked contrast between the behavior of Indian and non-Indian students. It is in such contexts that Indian students become most involved in what they are doing, concentrating completely on their work until it is completed, talking a great deal to one another in the group, and competing, with the other groups.

Philips explains the readiness of Warm Springs Indian children to participate in interaction controlled and organized by themselves by the familiarity children have with this sort of social organization; events in the Indian community are rarely directed by one person or by a leader.

Without describing typical interaction in the Kahewin community and explaining reluctance to perform with a director and

an audience as a function of non-familiarity with the structure, it can nevertheless be observed that children were very engaged in interaction which they directed themselves without an audience and very uncomfortable with a situation directed by a teacher and including an audience. It should again be emphasized that all members but one of the cast were girls and their reluctance to perform publically, even where verbalization and kinesic behaviour was scripted, was consistent with their general reluctance to publically communicate in the classroom. Performance in front of an audience was not part of the typical interaction patterns of the classroom and looking to the typical interaction patterns of the community is not necessary to explain the reluctance of students in this context.

One student in this classroom (brother of the first year student who rarely spoke) worked on a teacher-devised program in Reading and Mathematics in textbooks familiar to other students from their early primary grades. As no other students worked with these books, this student did not engage in the (usually) two-person conversations about tasks in which the other students participated. Group instructions given by the teacher did not involve him either. He was rarely spoken to by anyone in the classroom except the teacher who tried to supervise a part of his work every day. The teacher spoke privately of the boy as "semi-retarded" and as "unable to grasp much but a nice quiet kid". In class discussions where the teacher solicited information or opinions from students, this boy was never called upon; the teacher explained this as not wanting "to embarass him".

On a field trip with the "Cree" teacher to a stream near the boy's home, student interaction with this boy was radically different from what was customary in the classroom. Students obviously deferred to his superior knowledge about the best fishing spots, his skill in making and using a fish snare and his ability to engage in extended conversations with the Cree teacher in Cree. Students asked him questions in English and Cree about the muskrat and beaver pelts stretched on racks outside his house and boys, in particular, asked many questions about how the student had trapped those muskrats. Conversations with the boy, on this occasion were extended and involved discussion of a number of complex activities.

Keddie (1971:133) suggests that educational failure might be approached and explained by looking at the defining processes going on in schools:

> It is only recently that attention has been given to the defining processes occurring within the school itself and to the social organization of knowledge. The studies suggest that the processes by which students are categorized are not self-evident and point to an overlooked consequence of a differentiated curriculum; that it is part of the process by which educational deviants are created and their deviant identities maintained.

Young (1971) and Bernstein (1971) have strongly argued that what is defined as academic knowledge should become problematic to researchers of schools; that what counts as academic knowledge and becomes institutionalized in the curriculum, "reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control" (Bernstein 1971:47). To see that one area of knowledge and expertise becomes irrelevant in the school environment and that a person highly competent in that area becomes generally defined as unintelligent (indeed, "semi-

retarded") and his knowledge becomes invalidated shows again the power of the teacher (as derived from her position as guardian, judge and official transmitter of "valid knowledge") to define reality in the school setting. It was impossible to judge whether or not other students accepted this definition of the boy as unintelligent; all that can be noted is what was observed and that is that he was rarely an addressed receiver of teacher or student verbal interaction in the classroom.

In the classroom of the teacher involved with the oldest group of students in the school, the power of the teacher to define the intellectual capabilities of students has been discussed. It is also apparent that teacher judgement of the social identities of students has official weight (for example, girls were "shy"). Although control procedures may not be so direct with older students, the differential power of the teacher to define appropriate classroom behaviour is still evident.

Summary

The above discussion of interaction at Kehewin School indicates a number of areas over which teachers exercise their right to control the behaviour and identity of the students they teach. Particularly with young children it is apparent that physical comportment is, or should be, directed by teachers; topics of acceptable classroom discussion are, or should be, defined by teachers; appropriate speakers are those chosen by the teacher and the definition of the social identity of participants in classroom interaction is the teacher's definition.

Within such a situation where it is evident that one person has such comprehensive and far-reaching control over what officially goes on in that situation, the notion "conflict" with its implication of two parties having opposing views, is inadequate. Waller (quoted previously) says: "The teacher must win or he cannot remain a teacher". The conflict is fixed; one hopes that with an articulation of the nature of the contract which allows classroom interaction to occur, one can see that actors are not negotiating in a situation free of constraints and that differential power has an observable effect on situations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has been concerned with ethnographic description and analysis of interaction in an Indian school. Description and analysis are undertaken with the consideration that previous studies which assume that schooling for minority children involves "cultural conflict", might be theoretically and descriptively inadequate, and that this inadequacy would become evident in description of daily interaction in an Indian school. Although the notion of cultural conflict is used extensively in the literature concerned with inter-cultural education, the concept can be shown to have weak explanatory powers.

Observing that minority children experience cultural conflict when they enter the schooling institutions of the dominant society, involves the characterization of minority groups and the dominant society as being composed of individuals homogeneous in interests, motivations and values; the characterization of minority groups as being isolated, non-integrated and unitarily different from the dominant society; and the characterization of school interaction as involving actors who co-produce classroom events.

The first assumption of homogeneity of interests, motivations and values within cultural groups is discussed in Chapter One. Only

by assuming homogeneity can writers in the field characterize "Indians" and "Non-Indians" as thus and such in efforts to "aid intercultural understanding". Assuming homogeneity of interests between members of a culture is shown to be much more problematic than is recognized and within this perspective, power becomes an irrelevant consideration. Wallace (1961 and 1962) stresses the diversity of individual cognitions, motivations and values within cultural groups and finds the pertinent question to be the processes by which this diversity is organized and by which groups maintain themselves. He sees "cultures" as being organizations of contractual arrangements where complementarity of cognitions and motivations, rather than uniformity, allows diverse individuals to be collectively identified as cultures. This organization of diversity is necessarily characterized by differential power of individuals or groups within societies. A summary of the discussion about power as an important factor in the contracts by which classroom interactions are possible will be presented later.

The assumption of the isolation of North American Indian people from the dominant society was also discussed in Chapter One. If native people are characterized as being outside the North American context, they are assumed to be unitarily different from the dominant society and this difference is used to explain either their failure in institutional contexts or the failure of these institutions to serve them. This assumption of non-integration produces characterizations of native people as having norms deviant from the norms of the dominant (middle-class) society and this deviation is used to explain their varied social problems in terms

of the cultural conflict they experience in interaction with the dominant society. To assume that Indian people are poorly educated, poorly housed, unhealthy, and underemployed because of their isolation from the dominant society is to ignore totally the historical evidence of their particular integration in the North American context. "Contact" does not occur every time a six year old Indian child enters school; white contact occurred a long time ago and Indian people are and have been integrated into the political, economic and social systems of North America, in a particular way and at a particular level, for a long time. I have argued that this isolation characterization is spurious, based upon the mythology that not being middle-class is to be non-integrated into North American society. This mythology links very directly with the characterization of cultures as being homogeneous, consensual, classless and unitary and cannot be seen as an adequate portrayal of the social systems of North America.

The cultural conflict explanation of educational failure rests on a third assumption. Actors in the school situation (the relevent categories of actors here being "teachers" and "students") are assumed to bring to that social situation differing cultural backgrounds which will come into conflict. Characterizing participants as co-producers of classroom events was seen as inappropriate when the importance of the teacher's control of students was recognized. Chapter Two specifically discusses the problem of describing and analysing situations involving teachers and students as participants. Efforts were made to specify how classroom events would be isolated: Goffman's notion of the "encounter" was discussed as a productive

construct for describing some classroom interaction. Efforts were also made to specify those areas over which teachers exerted control in encounters. Teacher control was recognized as part of the "contract" by which classroom interaction is legitimated and specification of the nature of that control was shown to be important in description of the "classroom culture". Cultural conflict ("Indian v.s. Non-Indian") was not seen as useful in describing a situation defined, structured and controlled by one person, the teacher.

Chapter Three of the thesis briefly describes the struggle of Kehewin, the Indian reserve where fieldwork was carried out, to get a local school; the operation, staffing and population of the school in 1975-76 are also discussed. The construction of the school was to be part of a broad "human development" plan for the reserve. Further investigation into the reserve's development since early 1972 was beyond the scope of the present study. Such research would, however, place the school's operation in its community context, show relationships between the reserve and off-reserve agencies and businesses and could aid in the discussion or development of some criteria for long-term Indian reserve development.

Chapter Four of the thesis is concerned with situational description and analysis of interaction in the classrooms of four teachers primarily at Kehewin School. In description of recurrent patterns of classroom interaction, it became evident that classroom interaction can be seen as contractual, and that part of the contract is the recognition of the teacher's right to control the verbal and kinesic behaviour of students; students do not have such a right. Teachers also exercise their right to define appropriate partici-

pants in classroom interaction, appropriate topics of verbal address and to define the social identities of students; within the official structure of classroom interaction, students do not have such rights. Examples of the way teachers exercised their control were presented as observed.

The notion of cultural conflict is inappropriate when the differential power of the teacher to direct classroom events is recognized. The classroom is not an egalitarian situation where participants work out between themselves the nature of their interaction. For this reason, the notion of cultural conflict which implies that people of differing cultural backgrounds are involved in conflict because of the differences between cultures, is not descriptive or explanatory of observable classroom interaction. Rather, classroom interaction, while it may be at times conflictual, occurs in a certain institutional context where conflict occurs within certain limits and those limits are defined by the over-riding power of the teacher. This thesis tries to specify what those limits are and what kinds of relationships are evident between teachers and students in classrooms.

This thesis was focussed primarily on teacher and student interaction in classrooms. In Chapter Two, other sorts of school encounters, with other participants and settings, are outlined. Further research into these other sorts of encounters (for example, children's interaction on school buses or on the playground, teachers' interaction with each other or the administration in various settings) would certainly be useful in more nearly adequate ethnographic description of schools. Retaining a perspective which includes differential

power as an analytic category would be necessary to understand what is going on in these other encounters.

Literature concerning staff interaction in schools serving native children is not extensive, although the very high rates of staff turnover in such schools are widely lamented and programs designed to prepare teachers for "intercultural schools" have recently proliferated.

In keeping with the above, further research which analyzes classroom interaction in schools not designated as intercultural might aid in the definition of what is different and what is similar in classrooms where culture is or is not considered a problematic concern. Waller's observations in 1932 regarding the presence of conflict in all school interaction might be further explored today in assessing whether "the teacher pupil relationship" in contemporary schools is "a form of institutionalized dominance and subordination" (Waller 1932:195 and 196). Is this arrangement of dominance and subordination an ubiquitous concommitant of institutionalized schooling? Do teachers see classroom reality in the intercultural school in terms of the differential trait and value matrices that abound in the literature? How might that perspective affect interaction situationally? Is control more rigid when students are conceptualized as somehow culturally deficient or perhaps as just different? Will training in intercultural communication, when teachers are taught to "become sensitive to cultural differences in communicative styles" affect, in any important way, the daily interaction of teachers and students in classrooms?

None of the above questions have been answered in this thesis; I suggest that research which attempts to answer these questions must be based upon more sophisticated understandings of the social contexts of minority groups, their interactions with power structures and the institutional functioning of the school. I hope the point has been made that studies which explain educational difficulties on the basis of ethnic or cultural deficiencies or differences of the minority student will not be a productive perspective and that new directions for research in intercultural education are necessary. If this research is to be situational, it cannot only be directed to description of observable physical or verbal interaction: face-to-face interaction, like the small community, does not occur in a social vacuum and power is a factor of social situations which illuminates understanding of social events.

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